

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Division of Agricultural Development
Agricultural Development & Diversification Program (ADD)

Grant Project Final Report

Contract Number: 14057

Grant Project Title: International & National Marketing of Wisconsin's Beef Genetics

Amount of Funding Awarded: \$18,500

Name of Principal Contact Person: John W. Freitag, Wisconsin Beef Improvement Association

E-Mail Address: info@wisconsinbeef.com

Web Address: www.wisconsinbeef.com

Report Submitted on: December 31, 2002

The Wisconsin Beef Improvement Assn. (WBIA) and the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Assn. (WCA) appreciate very much the help, encouragement and patience that the ADD Grant Program has shown in our quest to develop a web site for the marketing of Wisconsin beef genetics. The departure of Executive Director John Freitag from WCA and the failure of the association to replace him have led to a short period of time where the site as floundered a bit. The bull test portion of the site has remained strong and viable but the rest of the site has been in limbo. I am glad to say that this has been resolved and WCA has hired an Executive Assistant and one of this person's duties will be to keep the site current and up to date. Qwen Lehmkuhler has been hired starting January 1, 2003 to act as the main contact for the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Assn. She will be meeting with John Freitag and ReQuest Ltd. in early January to learn what is required to keep the site current and up to date.

One of the key components of making the newly revised site more visible will be the promotion of the revised site. WBIA continues to list the site in all of their sale advertising. WCA will promote the site in Wisconsin Beef and the three Wisconsin ag newspapers. The Wisconsin Red Angus Assn. has approached us about the possibility of three breeders advertising bulls for sale on their home page. I believe this will come to fruition after the first of the year. This added promotion and visibility along with the new look of our web site will be a good boost for every organization involved in the site.

The Wisconsin Polled Hereford Assn. has committed to adding their web site to wisconsinbeef.com. Their addition of approximately 125 new addresses as well as their use of the site will add additional traffic to our web site. The problem of keeping the members of the associations current on our site will now be remedied by Qwen Lehmkuhler's employment. Part of her responsibilities will include contacting the breed associations so membership lists for the associations are current.

In my last report, I referenced the problem with getting participation from foreign beef producers without a face-to-face contact. Marvin Espenscheid, a member of the Wisconsin Beef Improvement Assn., has visited both South America and Mexico and carried information with him about the site. He has also hosted some breeders from these countries on their visit to Wisconsin and has given them a tour of the Bull Test Station as well as information about the site. This part of our merchandising effort is going to be slow however it continues to move forward in its developmental process.

Now that we have someone to keep our web site up to date, a new push will be initiated to get the different sections of the web site active again. We had a good start but without someone to keep all of the information current and remind the persons that were merchandising animals on the site to keep their listings current, its use diminished. Lehmkuhler's expertise and employment will again resolve this problem. There is also a push to direct market beef. By incorporating the advertising of the direct marketing section of this web site at events where the WCA "Steak Trailer" participates, 5 major events a year, more participation in the web site will occur and thus the web site will grow some more.

The WBIA portion of this web site continues to be the flag-ship for the web site. Its popularity continues to grow and as producers come to visit the site for bull test information and see the new look and the increased information that they can access from our revised site, this will only add to the usefulness of this site for beef producers. This can only have a multiplying effect on the use of the web site.

FOLLOW THROUGH is the key to finalizing this portion of wisconsinbeef.com. Everything that I have mentioned above goes back to coordination, timeliness and follow through. Both WBIA and WCA are committed to see that this happens. Now that the site is up and running, these two associations will provide the resources to keep the site current and useful for Wisconsin Beef producers.

Respectfully submitted,
John W. Freitag
Executive Director
Wisconsin Beef Improvement Assn.

International and National Marketing of Wisconsin's Beef Genetics
Addendum to Final Report
December 30, 2002

Revitalizing Wisconsinbeef.com

The Wisconsin Beef Improvement Association (WBIA) and the Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association (WCA) received an WDATCP ADD Grant to revitalize their website for the marketing of Wisconsin Beef Genetics and to transform the site into a resource for up-to-date beef information. ReQuest Ltd., a business solutions company, worked with WBIA and WCA to update the site, and will work with John Freitag to transition the site to WCA Executive Assistant Gwen Lehmkuhler for on-going updates.

WisconsinSeef.com has been revised to improve site functionality by providing easy navigation throughout the site. You will find it to be a convenient source of current information to help beef producers manage their herds, access market reports and information, check on the weather or locate a fellow cattle breeder. The site has added subject areas of interest to beef producers with direct links to some of the best beef resources in the country. These sites contain current information related to the respective topics, providing beef producers with easy access to need-to-know information to help them be more profitable. From feeding and nutrition to reproductive health and sire selection, Wisconsinbeef.com offers management information as well as marketing opportunities for Wisconsin beef producers. The main idea of the revised site is to provide a one-stop website for beef information for Wisconsin producers and thus increase traffic to the site. By increasing traffic, it then becomes easier to promote and increase producer participation and use of the marketing section of the site, resulting in the sale of more Wisconsin beef genetics and related products.

Since the site is new for all practical purposes, it will be important to garner beef producer feedback regarding the site and areas to enhance for the future. Examples might be additional topics, links, enhancing the events page, expanding the marketing section of the site and enhancements to the Test Station/Sale presentation via the web.

WisconsinBeef.com will continue to provide a convenient source of current information to help beef producers manage their operations. If producers are searching for a comprehensive source for up-to-date beef-related information, then WisconsinBeef.com is the right place. This site now provides access to general and Wisconsin-specific data and information, allowing prospective out-of-state and international visitors access to Wisconsin beef genetics and cattle.